The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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The Last Boy.

THE "Last Man"—so I've heard it said—
Will find the situation frightful,
With all the other people dead;
But I should think it would be delightful.
There's nothing I'd enjoy
Like being the Last Boy.

That candy-store just up the street—
I wouldn't lose a single minute
In choosing what I'd like to eat,
And spending several hours in it.
With nobody to say
I musn't do that way.

I'd go and visit all the shops,
And fill my pockets—fill them mainly
With little guns, and kites, and tops,
And other things I've teased for vainly.
And nobody would care,
If nobody was there.

I'd never go to bed; for then
There'd be no horrid nurse to take me;
I'd never go to school again;
There wouldn't be a soul to make me.
There's nothing I'd enjoy
Like being the Last Boy.

—*Slate and Pencil People.*

Every Year a Pearl.

Every year is a pearl, dear,
Perfect, pure, and fair;
God lets it grow within your life,
Trusting it to your care.

And death is the golden clasp, dear,
That fastens the pearly chain,
And it shines with a clearer lustre,
If the pearls are white through pain.

—*Selected.*

None but Christ; His life sustains me,
Strength and song to me He is;
None but Christ, His love constrains me,
He is mine and I am His.

Chatty.

JUST outside the village of D—— stands an old gray farm-house. The garden back of it is deserted and weed-grown, while untrimmed rose-bushes and lilacs form a thicket from the walk quite up to the side of the house, where, on windy nights, they scratch and rub and play tattoos till little lame Thony ducks his head under the quilt and almost cries with fright and loneliness.

Thony and his mother are the family that live in the old house, and rather a sorry life it is for the crippled boy, for his mother is poor and has to work busily instead of doing pleasant things to amuse him; sometimes she has to go away and leave him alone for nearly the whole day. There he lies on his small bed by the window, thinking, thinking till his head seems to whirl around; or, perhaps he sits up and tries to read a little.

One day as he sat watching a rosebush that bobbed up and down, as though bowing and trying to make his acquaintance, he heard a great twittering and chattering under his open window. By propping himself up with his pillow he managed to look over the sill, and, right there in the thick rose-bush, was a nest of four little bare, scrawny birds, with soft dark eyes and open, piping throats.

There was a sudden hush in the nest as Thony's head came over the window-sill, and the old birds flew away with sharp cries of alarm. One soon flew back to a lilac, and looked up at Thony with bright, beseeching eyes. It was a smaller, slenderer bird than the robin, and its color a clean shaded slate.

"O," thought Thony, "cat-birds! I wish I'd known you were there before."

He soon tired of leaning against the window ledge. Then, too, the parent bird would come no nearer to the nest while the small brown head kept station above it, so Thony lay back and thought of the queer little bird-babies under the window, till another look had to be taken, and after this, the peeps became so frequent that the old birds, finding that no harm came to them, lost their shyness and flew back and forth without fear.

Thony watched them day after day with increasing interest, almost always sharing his meals with them.

One morning, when the young birds were about half fledged, Thony looked down to the nest and saw them there alone. Neither of the old birds was in sight, nor did they appear though he watched for them several minutes. Then, leaning out, he put his hand softly over the nest. The birds were cold and still; only one opened its beak and gave a faint little cry that made Thony choke, it was so pitiful.

"Their father and mother must be dead," he cried, "and they are mcst! What shall I do?"

They would not take the crumbs he offered, but lay dull and stupid. He tried to warm them with his hands, but could hardly reach them. At last he carefully lifted the nest from its resting place and cuddled them close beside him, but in spite of his efforts only one was alive at night.

The old birds never returned, so Thony adopted the little orphan and gave him the name of Chatty.

The little boy was lonely no longer. Chatty was the most social and loving of pets. He pulled Thony's hair and pinched his ears to waken him in the morning, and chattered and played with him all day long. The window was always opened to let him pass out and in, and on warm nights he slept among the rose-leaves close by.

Doctor Ray, the village physician, sometimes stopped for a minute to see Thony and cheer him a bit. Millie, the doctor's pretty daughter, had often heard of Thony, and one day, being near the gray farm house, called to see him.

Thony looked admiringly at his visitor, but was too timid to talk much, or to introduce his pet, and after a little Millie went away, promising to come again and bring a book that she thought he would like. On the way home she stopped at the dressmaker's to learn how her new suit was getting on.

"O, mother," she cried, on reaching home, "you can't imagine how handsome my new dress is going to be. The color is elegant, and the slate trimmings harmonizes beautifully. Then the bonnet is so becoming. But I've changed my mind about the feathers. You'll see when it comes home. It's going to be just *bee-u-tiful.*"

The very day of Miss Millie's visit to Thony, Chatty was missing. Thony had seen him fly merrily away for his daily airing, but had watched in vain for his return. He anxiously whistled and called from the window, but his gay little friend made no answer. "O dear," sighed he, looking away toward the hills and the setting sun. Still Chatty did not come, and all night Thony lay listening, hoping to hear his tap on the window, and crying softly because it did not come. Long before dawn he was leaning out and calling for his pet. How he watched through all that day, and the next, and the next. If a sparrow rustled among the lilacs, he looked eagerly to see if it might not be Chatty, and his arms reached out longingly toward the stray birds that fluttered about the garden.

Thony became thin and peevish with mourning for his pet.

"Perhaps he's flown away south," said his mother, consolingly.

"No," said Thony, "the other birds haven't gone; besides he never would go without saying good-bye."

Two whole weeks had passed since Chatty's disappearance, when Miss Millie, radiant in the new suit, again set out to make calls, and again stopped to see the lame boy. Thony looked up, smiling shyly, as his mother brought her a chair; but instantly there swept over his face a look of joy, and he reached up both hands, crying, "Chatty! Chatty! Chatty!" in a voice trembling with gladness.

Miss Millie opened her blue eyes in amazement. Was the boy crazy? What did he mean by such behavior? But the look of joy was fast giving place to one of agony. The hands dropped and Thony turned toward the wall moaning, "Chatty, Chatty, Chatty," in a voice so full of misery that pretty Miss Ray put both white hands over her ears to shut out the fearful sound, while her look turned questioningly to the mother.

"It's the bird on your bonnet, Miss," said the woman; and though her voice was low, there was

a thrill of indignation in it that caught the girl's quick ear.

"Tell me about it, please," said she. So Millie heard the story of Chatty, and the woman seemed to soften toward her a little as she saw the bright tears brimming over and falling fast on the folds of the pretty dress, and learned that the first the girl had seen of Chatty he was quite dead, and that he had been given to her by the boy who had killed him because she had admired his beautiful plumage. She had never imagined that the bird was Thony's.

"Thony knew it was his bird by those nicks on its wings," said the mother. "I remember how vexed Chatty was when he cut them, and how he kept snapping at the scissors with his sharp, dark bill."

Millie took off the little bonnet and laid it gently on Thony's pillow. Then, with the fresh air tossing her light curls, and the sunlight glinting brightly among their golden threads, she walked thoughtfully home. The calls were not made that day, but a new bonnet was; and, though it may not be "just the bee-u-tifulest," it is a beautiful bonnet, and without a suggestion of murdered birds or broken hearts.

A merry mocking bird now sings and swings in a dainty cage near Thony's bed, and nowhere will you find firmer friends than the little boy and the doctor's daughter.—*S. S. Classmate.*

Cure for Fits.

For a fit of passion: Walk out into the open air: you may speak your mind to the winds without hurting any one or proclaiming yourself a simpleton.

For a fit of idleness: Count the ticking of a clock; do this for one hour, and you will pull off your coat for the next, and work hard.

For a fit of extravagance and folly: Go to the workhouse, or speak with the ragged inmates of a jail, and you will be convinced that

"Who makes his bed of brier and thorn,
Must be content to lie forlorn."

For a fit of ambition: Go into the churchyard and read gravestones; they will tell you the end of ambition. The grave will soon become your bed-chamber, the earth your pillow, corruption your father, and the worm your mother and sister.

For a fit of repining: Look about for the halt and blind, and visit the bed-ridden, and afflicted, and deranged; they will make you ashamed of complaining of your lighter afflictions.

For the Myrtle.

Grandmamma's Spec's.

BY HENRIETTA E. PAGE.

I was sitting in my study;
My thoughts were far away,
I was feeling sad and lonely,
And gloomy was the day:
For the trees were nearly leafless,
And constant fell the rain:
While the wind among the branches
Moaned like a thing in pain.

All around was warmth and brightness
I ought not to despair,
But within a shadowy corner
There stood an "empty chair."
Little Ethel was quite busy
Rummaging a bureau o'er,
While toys were scattered far and wide
From fireplace unto door.

Suddenly an exclamation.
"Ell! I decare, what nex?
Ma-ma, gam-ma's done to heben,
And she has-'nt took her spec's."
Then she held to view the glasses
Dear mother used to wear.
Ah! many things she left besides
That ever empty chair.

I took the baby in my arms,
And laid the spec's aside.
"She will need them not my darling
Beyond the gleaming tide,
For the streets are broad and golden
And everything is fair,
And grandmamma without her spec's
Can see the glories there."

Politeness by Telephone.

A Mexican correspondent says: "The peremptory American method of making telephone calls—'Hello!' 'Hello!' 'Give me 1,269!' etc.—would never do in the Castillian tongue. Courtesy of intercourse must be preserved over the telephone wires in Mexico, even between invisible communicants; and vexatiousness and petulance are never allowed to obtain utterance there. The regular response from the central office to a telephone call is 'Mande usted!' which is equivalent to 'At yonr command!' Then preliminaries are gone through something as follows: 'Good morning, senorita; how do you do?' 'Very well, I thank you; what service may I render you?' 'Will you kindly do me the favor of enabling me to speak with Don So-and so, No. 777?' 'With much pleasure!' etc., etc., and when the connection is made, the usual polite introductories are gone through before proceeding to the business in hand."—*Sel.*

For the Myrtle.

Like your Father in Heaven.

BLESSINGS on the gentle teacher
Who his own in kindness leads,
And the wants of little children
With unwearied fondness heeds.

He has learned the precious lesson
Which the Master taught us all,
To be careful of the least ones
As God, heeds the sparrow's fall. E. M. B.

Entertaining a Crow.

Privation makes birds and animals less shy of man than they are when comfortably warm and well fed. A remarkable story is told by a Newburyport paper of a crow which had an unusually fine and social dinner just before Christmas last year.

One morning, a lady residing in the suburbs, on looking out of the window, saw a crow solemnly perched on a low-hanging limb of a tree near the house. An idea prompted her to offer him something to eat, and taking a boiled potato, she started out. So far from being frightened, he appeared just as a man would who had given his order at table and saw the food coming. He straightened up, reached out for the morsel, transferred it to one of his claws, and leisurely proceeded to eat it.

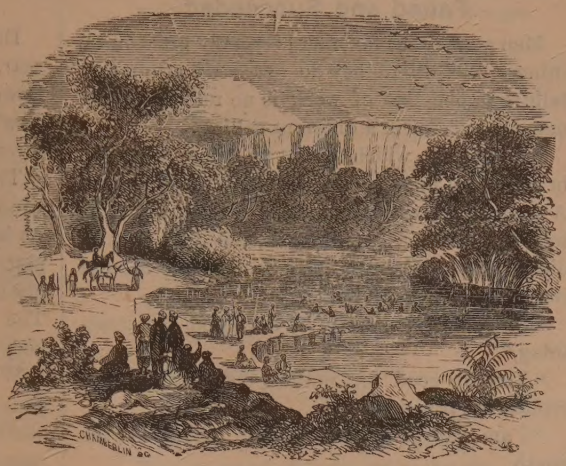
Word was conveyed to the children of the household, and a merry time followed. The crow, feeling he was hospitably entertained and hospitably welcomed, jumped down from his perch, strutted about the yard, and feasted to his heart's content on bits of meat, pastry, cake and peanuts.

The nuts he seemed to enjoy hugely. He would take the kernels as offered him, and hold them in his mouth until it was crammed to its fullest capacity, when he would fly a short distance, deposit them on the snow, and pick them up at his leisure. He enjoyed a drink of cold water from a tin dipper, and actually tried to steal the dipper, making several ineffectual attempts to take it in his mouth by the handle.

Finally he was stuffed to repletion, when the idea seem to strike him that it was a hard winter, and as he had opportunity, he had better provide for the future, for after hunting about he discovered in the rear of the house a deep foot-track in the ice. Continuing to take what was offered him, he would fly to this place and drop it there.

"EVERYTHING has gone so smooth to-day," said a little girl; "all my lessons in school were perfect, I helped clear away the dinner things, I have learned my Bible verses, and I have 'most done my knitting! and it is because I feel *willing-hearted* to-day."

THERE is not in the world so great and difficult a task as that of getting a great name. Life is closed when the work is scarcely begun.



Crossing the River.

IN the olden days rivers were crossed by fords instead of bridges.

We read in the xvith chapter of Isaiah at the 2nd verse, "It shall be that as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon."

A Word to the Girls.

In Dr. John Todd's "Letters to a Daughter," he wrote, "Whatever one does well she is sure to do easily," and words to the effect that what one goes at thoroughly ceases to be disagreeable.

I knew a girl of twenty years ago who took these words into her heart, and they have made work the pleasure of her life. All the careless people who watch her cry out at the trouble she takes with everything she does; but they are very apt to say, after all is through, "You have such an *easy* way of turning off things, and things always stay done for you." Of course they do. Thorough is the Saxon for through, and anything that is thoroughly done is through with.

It is a queer paradox that if you try to do things easily, to shirk and slur them over, you will always find it hard to get along; while if you put all sorts of pains into your work, and never think how easily it can be done, but how well it can be, you find it growing easier day by day.—*Wide Awake.*

THERE are more than eight thousand species of fishes.

Failed and Succeeded.

Men admit that no man is equally great in all things. Yet often they do not see that a man's failure in one line of work is no reason why he may not succeed in a different calling.

An incident which occurred some years ago in a London linen store illustrates this blindness. A young man whose bluntness was such that he was of no use as a salesman, was told that he did not suit and must go. Seeking the head of the house, the youth said:

"Don't turn me away; I am good for something,"

"You are good for nothing as a salesman," replied the principal.

"I am sure I can be useful," coutinued tbe youth.

"How? Tell me how?"

"I don't know, sir; I don't know."

"Nor do I," said the principal, laughing at the boy's eagerness and ignorance.

"Don't put me away," continued the youth; "try me at something else. I know I can't sell, but I can make myself useful somehow; I know I can.

Moved by his earnestness, the principal placed him in the counting-room. Immediately his aptitude for figures showed itself. In a few years he became the head cashier of the concern. Throughout the country he was known as an eminent accountant.—*Sel.*

A Hint to the Boys.

I stood in a store the other day, when a boy came in and applied for a situation.

"Can you write a good hand?" he was asked.

"Yaas."

"Good at figures?"

"Yaas."

"That will do; I do not want you," said the merchant.

"But," I said when the boy had gone, "I know the lad to be an honest, industrious boy. Why do you not give him a chance?"

"Because he hasn't learned to say 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir.' If, when applying for a situation, he answers as he did, how will he answer customers after being here a month?"

What could I say to that? He had fallen into a bad habit, young as he was, which turned him away from the first situation he had ever applied for.—*Sel.*

Rescued from the Flames.

During one of the great storms of the past year, the lightning struck a barn in the village of Lowenberg, setting it on fire, and a stork's nest, in which there was some young storklings, was threatened by the flames.

The two parent birds contemplated the horrible situation from a distance with evident distress. At last the mother bird darted down upon the nest, and seizing one of her young family with her beak, bore it off to a safe spot in a meadow. The father followed her, and settled down to keep watch over his offspring.

When the mother returned to the scene of danger the fire had reached the nest, in which one bird still remained, but while she was flying round it, preparing for a descent, the young one fell through the charred nest into the burning barn. Down darted the mother into the smoke and fire, and coming up again with her *sprossting* in her keak, flew off, apparently unhurt.

On the next day a wounded stork fell to the ground in the market-place of the neighboring town of Trebbin. She was unable to stand, and the policeman of the little town carried her into the guard-house, where it was discovered that both her legs were sorely burned, and she was recognized as the heroic mother who had done the brave feat of rescue at the fire at Lowenberg.

A physician was sent for, and the burgomaster found her a temporary hospital in the Rathaus. Meanwhile the spouse of the sick stork had discovered her whereabouts. He attended diligently to the two young ones, and paid daily visits to the mother, as if to inform himself how the patient was getting on, and to assure her that their children were doing well.

The kind school children of Trebbin readily charged themselves with the task of finding food for the patient, bringing her every day far more than was necessary, and the burgomaster also paid an official visit every day to the sick guest of the municipality, to see that the doctor's orders were duly carried out, and in less than a fortnight the bird was sufficiently recovered to fly away to her husband and children.

In Germany the stork's nest is often found on the housetops, and little platforms may frequently be seen which have been put up expressly for the stork to build its rough nest upon.—*Child's Companion.*

WISDOM is better than strength.

Sermon.

How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.—*Psalms* xxxvi. 7.

"We had a good sermon to-day about counting our mercies," said Andrew.

"That was a needed sermon I am sure," said Mary "For there are so many people that grumble their lives away, and are never contented with any thing. They need line upon line and precept upon precept in this direction."

"I know there are some grumblers who do nothing but complain, and who have no good reason for much of their discontent. But these are the exception to the rule, for I am sure that most people seem to be trying to make the best of life; and, when you consider all they have to go through between childhood and old age, you will not wonder that they are sometimes inclined to say that the way is a hard way."

"What do you mean by the way being a hard way? I am sure there are a great many things to enjoy as we go along through life."

"That was just the tenor of the sermon. Our minister said that there are a great many things to enjoy, but we have also a great many things to suffer.

The elements about us all do us good, if we know just how to use them. But a little too much of any of them will do us harm. As long as we can keep them as servants all goes well with us, but let fire, water, or air, get the mastery, and we are destroyed by them.

Our bodies that we live in here are frail, and we are obliged to take constant care of them or they will wear out early. And at the most and best we can only stay on the earth through a brief three score and ten years.

Yet after all this had been admitted, there are many mercies on the way, which we may count, and enjoy, if we will.

Our minister read us a poem which will help us to remember this.

There is many a rest on the road of life,
If we only could stop and take it,
And many a tone from the better land,
If we only would listen to hear it.
To the manly soul that is full of hope
And whose beautiful trust ne'er fails,
The grass is green and the flowers fair
Though the wintry storm prevails.

Better to hope though the clouds hang low,
And keep the eye still lifted;
For the sweet blue sky will soon peep through
Where the ominous clouds are rifted.
There was never a night without a day.
Or an evening without a morning,
And the darkest hour, as the proverb goes,
Is the hour before the dawning.

There is many a gem on the path of life,
Which we pass in our idle pleasure,
Which is richer far than the jeweled crown,
Or the miser's hoarded treasure.
It may be the love of a little child,
Or a mother's prayer to heaven,
Or it may be a beggar's grateful thanks
For a cup of water given.

Better to weave the web of life
A bright and golden filling,
And to do God's will with a ready heart
And hands that are swift and willing,
Than to snap the delicate, tender threads
Of our curious lives asunder,
And then blame heaven for the tangled ends,
And sit, and grieve, and wonder.

Our Sunday Schools.

NEW YORK.

At Edwards the Universalists and Methodists have maintained a Sunday school together for several years. But the Methodists having recently erected a new house of worship and moved into it, the Universalists have organized a school of their own, sent for the *Helper* and lesson sheets and raised money to purchase a library. Forty scholars have been already enrolled, a portion of whom came from the Union school.

At Frankfort though there has been no regular preaching for some time past, the Sunday school has been successfully continued. They have been energetic in raising money for books and other necessaries of the school and are still continuing their activity with the hope of some time having again a preacher to break for them the bread of life.

At Potsdam the Sunday school prospers. It has lately purchased a new set of service books and given its full proportion toward the annual contribution to the General Convention.

INDIANA.

At Patriot in a society which for several years has been dormant, a Sunday school has been recently organized and the future outlook is flourishing.

The Sunday school has been reopened at McHenry and promises well.

ILLINOIS.

The school of St. Paul's Universalist Church Chicago, has an enrollment of 360 pupils with an average attendance of 260. The school has sustained itself and contributed over $100 toward missionary work the past year.

MICHIGAN.

We have a prospering Sunday school at Liberty. During the past year it has added $65 worth of books to its library and has contributed to the help of the church both moral and financial support, besides members to its roll.

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

246.—ENIGMA.

I am composed of 21 letters.
My 3, 2, 4, 7 is a kind of food.
My 1, 6, 19, 9 is the opposite of cold.
My 12, 13, 11, 6, 15 is to direct a boat.
My 18, 19, 20, 21 is the opposite of storm.
My 10, 17, 16 is a kind of meat.
My 8, 14, 13 is the opposite of cold.
My 3, 4, 5, 6 is to fashion,
My 15, 14, 13 is to decay.
My whole is in Psalms. *Beth.*

247.—ANAGRAM.

Ho hatt nem luowd raipse het dorL rof sih oogndses dan rof sih nowedrluf kowrs ot het dilcrhen fo nem.

Mary Bowen.

248.—DROP LETTER PUZZLE.

F—r—h—m—r—y—s—r—a—a—o—e—h—h—a—e—s—n—t—y—r—t—r—a—h—t—u—t—t—e—l—u—s.

249.—ANAGRAM.

Mrembree teh bathbsa ayd ot ekep ti yhol.

E. F. Veazie.

250.—ENIGMA.

I am composed of 21 letters.
My 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 7, 12 is a peninsula in British America.
My 3, 4, 2 is a verb.
My 21, 12, 9, 20, 14 is a retinue.
My 10, 2, 19, 4 is an animal.
My 15, 17, 11, 12 is part of a house.
My 1, 20 8, 1, 20, 2 is a girl's name.
My 6, 3, 8, 2 is a story.
My 20, 14 is a preposition.
My 12, 3, 21 is an animal.
My 1, 3, 12, 15 is used in cooking.
My 16, 2, 5 is a number.
My 18, 11, 17 is to court.
My whole is a good motto. *Bertha F. John.*

CONUNDRUMS.

Why should potatoes grow better than any other vegetable? Because they have eyes to see what they are doing.

Why did Joseph's brethren put him into the pit?
Because they thought it was a good opening for a young man.

When is coffee like the soil? When it is ground.

What kind of fish has its eyes nearest together?
The smallest fish.

Where are balls and routs supplied gratis?
On the field of battle.

241.—ENIGMA.

Come unto me.

242.—ANAGRAM.

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack.

243.—DROP LETTER PUZZLE.

Jesus wept.

244.—ANAGRAM.

Suffer little children to come unto me.

245.—ENIGMA.

In my Father's house are many mansions.

CONUNDRUMS.

Why is a horse the most curious feeder in the world?
Because he eats best when he has not a bit in his mouth.

What part of London does a man remind us of who walks lame? Cripple-gate (gait).

OUR HARVESTERS.

Bertha John, 3; Myrtie Daymon, 3; Florence Stanley, 4.

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